

Model Home of 1927

701 N. Richman Avenue

1927

Cottage Style

Status: Local Landmark



Constructed for \$9,200 in four months in 1927, this house is a rather streamlined version of a cottage style, referred to in the local newspaper at the time as a “modernized English design.” A large picture window dominates the façade, and the house has a number of unique architectural features, such as the extension of the street-facing gable nearly to the ground on one side, while also forming the roof of the porte-cochere on the opposite side, and a repeat of the triangle shape over the large picture window at the porte-cochere.

In 1927, to promote home building the Fullerton Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors approved a proposal to buy a lot and build a model home or show-home in the Golden Hill subdivision. The owner and sub-divider of Golden Hill was Robert E. Corcoran, a prominent businessman who had constructed his residence at 761 N. Richman Avenue, the oldest home in the Golden Hill neighborhood, in 1906. Richman Avenue was selected as the location for the model home, because the street still had a large number of available lots for sale in an area that remained largely undeveloped.

Construction of the model home began on June 13, 1927, with all the work and supplies provided by Fullerton craftsmen and businesses. Signs directing visitors to the model home were placed around town, and eventually over 2,600 people visited the home. Although advertised as affordable, the home’s then steep-selling price of \$9,200 made it too expensive for the average family, and it was eventually sold in April, 1929, to Robert E. Corcoran.

Overall, the model home’s plan represented a major shift from Victorian housing to a new, modern form of housing for the 20th century. In spite of its status as a model home, none other like it was ever built in Fullerton. It was not until after World War II that model homes became a popular promotional tool for home builders of the many subdivisions planned and developed in Fullerton.