Facing north on Farmington Avenue, the Norman S. and Mary E. Gridley House sits on a long narrow lot bordered to the south by the Farmington River. The surrounding neighborhood contains Italianate-, Queen Anne-, and Colonial Revival-style buildings.
Built around 1880, this Italianate-style dwelling utilizes a T shaped floor plan. A small open, corner veranda with elaborately turned columns and balustrade, spindles, and brackets highlight the facade. The one-over-one sash are accented by brownstone lintels and sills. The roof’s wide overhanging eaves are devoid of any architectural embellishments and a modest, single-story, open porch extends from the rear elevation.

In December of 1878 Mary E. Gridley purchased the old Solomon Langdon Inn from Romeo Elton for $2,000 (FLR 65:360). The daughter of wealthy farmer, Luther T. Parsons, and his wife Louisa, Mary (1831-1911) was the wife of Norman S. Gridley. Born in Harwinton, Gridley was the son of Salmon and Mary (Brown) Gridley, who resided in the small farmhouse at 1761 Farmington Avenue. According to Samuel Pepper in Hurlbert’s Farmington Town Clerks and Their Times, Norman Gridley operated the "Gridley express" which ran between Unionville and Hartford. Pepper further states that Gridley lived in the old Langdon Inn until he built the brick house to the east. Although there are no mortgages to pinpoint an exact date, stylistically the house was probably built before 1885. In 1896 the Gridleys sold the old inn to John S. Parsons, who tore it down and built himself a new house (FLR 71:186). Upon Mary’s death in 1911, the house was distributed to their son, John P. Gridley of West Hartford (FLR 80:141; 92:345). This company manufactured woven felt and scarlet bushing cloth used in pianos, pool tables and blankets. The firm still functions along Perry Street today. The house passed through a number of hands after 1956 and the present owners purchased the property in 1980 (FLR 277:1122). SEE CONTINUATION SHEET
This well-preserved, late Italianate-style dwelling makes a significant contribution to the streetscape of Farmington Avenue. Historically the house is important due to its association with the Gridley family, early Unionville settlers.