The house faces westward at a corner bend on Cottage Street. Similar houses are found throughout the neighborhood. A brook lies to the rear and small flower beds are scattered over the lawn.
This "L" shaped Stick-style house features gable-to-street west and south elevations with a small open porch and main entrance at the intersecting gable ells. This shed-roofed porch has square posts with brackets, an "X" patterned balustrade, and a cutwork, patterned skirt below. The west ell displays paired two-over-two sash with imbricated shingles and diagonal clapboarding at the second story window level, a course of board and batten marks the second story sill line on the sides of the ell. Steeply-pitched gables with modest vergeboards exhibit overhanging eaves with corner brackets and extended rafters underneath. The south ell has a first story shed-roofed bay window with other features similar to the west ell. There is a small shed-roofed ell on the north elevation.

This house was built on land purchased by Sherman and Frank Sanford in 1884. The small lot was originally part of a six acre tract of land stretching along the west side of Avon Road to Farmington Avenue. In 1850 E.K. Hamilton purchased this tract which included a section of the raceway: at Roaring Brook and he operated first a button and later a hook and eye manufactory there (FLR 51:254). When his son James E. Hamilton sold this land with buildings to Sherman and Frank Sanford in 1884, the northern section opposite Keyes Street on West Avon Road still remained undeveloped (FLR 68:86). Sherman (b. 1835, Avon) had moved to Unionville in 1861 where he ran a successful logging and lumber business. He was later joined by his brother Edmund (b.1824, Avon) and nephew Frank (b. 1853) who remained at the family homestead in Avon. Frank was the son of Edmund and Mary (Tillotson) Sanford. In 1883 he married Marion Hawley (b. 1851, Avon), daughter of Robert Hawley of Avon, who was killed in the Civil War battle at Antietam. Sherman formed a partnership with his uncle under the name Sherman and Frank Sanford; Frank acted as a dealer in lumber, hardware, and building materials. When Sherman retired in 1884, Frank was joined by his brother-in-law C.R. Hawley; and they established their headquarters on land purchased that year by Sherman and Frank at the corner of West Avon Road and Farmington Avenue. The firm, known as Sanford & Hawley, divided the northern sector of this property into ½ acre lots, built an access road (Cottage Street), and erected houses all bearing similar Stick-style characteristics. The lot at 38 Cottage Street was sold with a house in 1885 to

Laura A. (Palmeter) Fenn, wife of Abijah Fenn, both of Harwinton, Connecticut (FLR 68:193, 63:407). Their son Frank W. (1838-1915) deeded the property to his second wife Julia A. Burnes in 1887 through Frank Sanford (FLR 69:84, 85). In 1915 Julia A. sold the property to Ellen M. Hart (FLR 77:579). This house has historical value through its association with the Sanford and Hawley Company and the growth of construction in late nineteenth-century Unionville.