

Property Type:

Historic Preservation Research Office

Site No. _____

Structure/Site Information Form

1 IDENTIFICATION

Street Address: 401 Park
Park City, Summit County, Utah

UTM: 12 458090 4499030

Name of Structure: John Diem House

T. R. S.

Present Owner: Coalition Land Co.

Owner Address: c/o Herb Armstrong
P.O. Box 1510, Park City, Utah 84060

Year Built (Tax Record):
Legal Description

Effective Age:
Kind of Building:

Tax #: PC 51

Lot 1 Block 4, Park City Survey
Less than one acre.

2 STATUS/USE

Original Owner: John Diem

Construction Date: 1899

Demolition Date:

Original Use: Residence

Present Use: Vacant

Building Condition:

Integrity:

Preliminary Evaluation:

Final Register Status:

- | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Site | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Significant | <input type="checkbox"/> Not of the | <input type="checkbox"/> National Landmark | <input type="checkbox"/> District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor Alterations | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributory | Historic Period | <input type="checkbox"/> National Register | <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Resource |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated | | <input type="checkbox"/> Major Alterations | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Contributory | | <input type="checkbox"/> State Register | <input type="checkbox"/> Thematic |

3 DOCUMENTATION

Photography: Date of Slides: 1983 Slide No.: Date of Photographs: 1983 Photo No.:
Views: Front Side Rear Other Views: Front Side Rear Other

Research Sources:

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abstract of Title | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sanborn Maps | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspapers | <input type="checkbox"/> U of U Library |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plat Records/Map | <input type="checkbox"/> City Directories | <input type="checkbox"/> Utah State Historical Society | <input type="checkbox"/> BYU Library |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tax Card & Photo | <input type="checkbox"/> Biographical Encyclopedias | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Interviews | <input type="checkbox"/> USU Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building Permit | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Obituary Index | <input type="checkbox"/> LDS Church Archives | <input type="checkbox"/> SLC Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sewer Permit | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County & City Histories | <input type="checkbox"/> LDS Genealogical Society | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Census Records |

Bibliographical References (books, articles, records, interviews, old photographs and maps, etc.):

Park City, Utah - Souvenir Edition. (Park City, Utah: The Park Record, 1902).
Park Record. October 7, 1899, p. 3.

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Building Materials: Wood

Building Type/Style: Pyramid House (variant)

Description of physical appearance & significant architectural features:
(Include additions, alterations, ancillary structures, and landscaping if applicable)

This house is a one and one half story frame pyramid house with a truncated hip roof. It is a slightly larger variant of the basic pyramid house. Instead of having a square plan of four rooms, it was elongated to a 25 x 37 foot rectangular form with four small half-size rooms attached to the rear of the four room core. The top half story was also opened up with dormers to provide additional floor space. Dormers project from the east, west, and south roof slopes. The east dormer is particularly distinctive because it was treated as a surface to decorate. Jigsaw cut foliated scrolls fill the pediment, and ribbons attached to wheat ear drops run down the sides of the frame. The west dormer is a door instead of a window, one that opens onto a ramp that is set into the hillside behind the house.

Typical of the basic pyramid house is the generally symmetrical facade with a door set slightly off-center between pairs of windows and the low pitch hip roof porch spanning the facade. The porch is in a deteriorated condition, as is the rest of the house, but the original lathe turned piers and elaborate jigsaw cut brackets have survived to the present. Lattice bands span the spaces between the piers, except directly in front of the door. The original balustrade was probably replaced by the existing low wall of drop siding. The
(See continuation sheet)

Statement of Historical Significance:

Construction Date: 1899

Built in 1899, the John Diem House at 401 Park is architecturally significant as one of 69 extant pyramid houses in Park City, 28 of which are included in this nomination. Of the 28 being nominated, 11 are true pyramid houses and 17 are variants of the basic type. This house is one of the variants of the pyramid house. The pyramid house is one of the three most common house types built during the early period of Park City's mining boom era, and significantly contributes to the character of the residential area. It appeared early on, but was built with variations longer than the other two types.

John Diem purchased this property in November of 1898 and the following year had this house constructed.¹ He and his wife, Mable, whom he had married in 1898, lived in this house until 1909. John was a harness and saddle maker, having established his saddlery in Park City in 1886. The fire of 1898 destroyed his commercial building, but it was rebuilt and he continued with his successful business. Diem also owned mining property and was listed as the president of various smaller mining companies. He was born in Switzerland in 1861 and came to the U.S. in 1874. Before coming to Park City, John had worked in a harness shop in Payson, Utah for three years, and previous to that had worked in Salt Lake City, where he had received his training in the harness and saddle trade. His wife, Mable, was born in Nevada in 1872.

Other owners of the house include William Rosevear (1909-11), Eliza Martin (1911-18), and John W. McClellan (1918-45).

¹Park Record, October 7, 1899, p. 3.

401 Park

Description continued:

balustrades of several other Park City houses were replaced in the same fashion. It is an unobtrusive alteration. There is a second door into the south side of the building. The shed porch roof over that door is not original, but is a minor, unobtrusive change.

The interior of the house is divided into four major rooms. In addition, there are four small rooms across the back of the house. A staircase runs up from the northwest corner of the building to provide access to two rooms on the top half story.

The house has been vacant for a few years and shows signs of neglect on both the interior and exterior. Because the windows and doors of the John Diem House are no longer intact, and the building is in need of some porch repair and a paint job, it appears to be more deteriorated than it actually is. The roof is intact, as are all four walls, and the building is quite stable. The original plan and a majority of the window and door moldings and decorative features which distinguish this type of pyramid house variant are also intact.

The John Diem House is one example of a particular variant of the pyramid house. As an easily modified house type, the pyramid house was built in a number of variations. At about the turn of the century a small number of pyramid houses were built that are larger and slightly more elaborate than the basic four room square pyramid house. It is estimated that less than 10 examples of this variant were built. The roof and facade configuration of those houses are similar to the basic pyramid house, but the houses are generally more than two rooms deep, have an additional half story as is reflected by dormers, and have more decorative features than the simple pyramid house. Including the John Diem House, there are only three examples of this variant of the pyramid house included in the Park City nomination that have not received extensive alterations that affect their integrity. Of the three examples of this type, the John Diem House is particularly notable for its jigsaw cut ornament on the dormer and on the porch. Such stylistic features are rare in Park City, therefore their existence on this house provide important documentation of the range of architectural expression in the town. Despite the somewhat deteriorated condition of the house, it maintains its original integrity.