



The Colebrook Preservation Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 24
Colebrook, CT 06021

Dear Colebrook Store Friend and Donor:

RE: "The Inside Story" on the Colebrook Store
A September, 2026 Progress Report from CPS

BACKGROUND

When the Colebrook Store closed at the beginning of 2025, it's not-for-profit owner, The Colebrook Preservation Society ("CPS"), announced the kickoff of: (1) a major fundraising campaign, (2) a Store interior repair/restoration/replacement/preservation project and (3) an eventual Store reopening via a lease to a new operator. This effort was titled "The Inside Story" because such previous store improvement undertakings were mainly focused on the building foundation, exterior and utilities. As a result of very generous community donations and NCCF/Draper grants, CPS has been able to broaden its plan significantly in the areas of restoration and preservation while finally attacking electrical, plumbing, building code, ADA and security/safety issues. Throughout the program, the main thrust has been to restore and preserve the historic building for it to usefully stand for another 200 plus years.

MAJOR WORK TARGETS

Basement "dehumidifying" (to stop flooding and significant dampness) was accomplished by fixing building gutters, repairing foundation faults, digging a new drain and installing a commercial dehumidifier.

Two Windows, custom made, were installed on the south side of the first floor. They exactly match the historic two front windows with shutters and allow for additional natural light to minimize the "dark" feeling customers had when entering the Store.

Exterior Painting of the building to protect it for another 10-15 years.

The Front Doors were completely restored by Kingsland. The main entrance door was recrafted to provide a standard-width entry. The "post office" door was raised 9 inches due to inside floor changes (mentioned below).

Store Flooring was replaced with new maple floor boards that are the same exceptional width as the old, original boards. The old maple flooring could not be repaired (holes, sagging, tripping hazard, ...); the subflooring was compromised

and sections of the basement supporting structure were worn out/unsafe. All was rebuilt. The kitchen area vinyl flooring and that sub floor were in similar unrepairable condition and replaced with health department compliant material. Store Tin Ceiling could not be repaired/restored but was replaced with the same real tin panels as the original. Additionally, all lighting, fans, old wiring and switches were removed. The replacement materials and electrical items are now all code compliant. The 5 old, hanging globe lights were rewired, polished and rehung to complete the restoration.

Post Office space was rebuilt and now the space is very open and part of the main Store area. The floor was raised 9 inches to accommodate needed HVAC and to make it level with the main room floor. The drop ceiling was removed for the installation of new lighting, a fan and the same tin ceiling tiles as were used in the main room restoration. The floor was finally finished with the same old style maple floor boards as mentioned above without the ADA tripping issue.

Main Floor Restroom renovation included room widening, all new fixtures, new flooring and several other ADA improvements.

2nd Floor needed to be seriously cleaned and all the flooring either refinished or replaced.

IN CONCLUSION

To summarize, where it has been possible and affordable to repair, preserve and restore, it was done. ADA, building codes and fire/security issues had to be addressed as well as electrical, plumbing and HVAC upgrades. There have been a number of pleasant surprises such as: finding and exposing original wall beams, being able to rewire and restore the old globe hanging lights and being able to extend the tin ceiling into the post office space and part of the kitchen area. Other surprises were time consuming and expensive such as rebuilding the main floor support structure and replacing all sub flooring. Building renovation should be concluded in about a month leaving only the tenant improvements and kitchen equipment installation to be accomplished for a new operator. A search for and negotiations with potential lessees are ongoing with expectations of reopening the Store before June 1st, 2027.

Last but not least, we want to thank you all for your continued support as we work to refurbish and preserve the Store! It would not happen without you.



Ed Lord, President of CPS