



Jackson County Courthouse

85 Washington St.

Jefferson, GA 30549

Project Statement

This project was the dream of the local historic preservation committee. Metal had to be rolled a specific way (per our architect); there had to be a person on the team who understood plaster repair. Working with our carpenters and subcontractors, we positively identified structural issues that went far beyond the usual interior remodel. All construction had to be furnished in a historically proper fashion. Not every challenge encountered had a pre-designed solution. This allowed all our team members a distinctive problem-solving experience. The Owners and community are quite proud of the work we accomplished, as are we. Enclosed are some specific instances of challenges faced by our team and the solutions we employed.

The Owner required that the first floor remain open to the public. Work was performed on the second floor, where the only access to the upstairs was via the stairway. Using any upstairs windows for anything besides the trash chute proved to be logistically impossible; large material such as scaffolding, ladders, metal studs, drywall, lumber, metal ceiling tile and molding, glass, light fixtures, and HVAC ductwork had to be hand-carried through the first floor and stairway very carefully. The road had to be blocked off to stage the dumpsters. All trash was removed from the second floor via the trash chute, which had to be erected very carefully so as not to damage the exterior of the building or the irreplaceable marble threshold at the window opening where the trash was removed from the second floor.

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The courtroom ceilings were nearly 20' high. No electrical aerial work platforms could be used on the second floor, since the floor was not structurally designed to withhold the weight, and there was limited access. Three large mobile scaffolding platforms were erected within the space and used for most all work above 10'. This created a much more labor-intensive scenario for all workers.

Existing molding, trim, millwork, plaster, masonry, doors, and hardware had to be precisely matched using a specialty Architectural Woodwork manufacturer. Custom knives and cutting tools had to be used to create these unique profiles. Metal ceiling panels, molding, and trim had to be custom. The most challenging of the pieces was the 30" radius cove that would be installed around the perimeter of the ceiling. It took nearly 3 trials of fabrication to get the pieces correct. Installation required carpenters to perform precision framing for the new pieces to fit within the inconsistencies of existing ceiling framing.

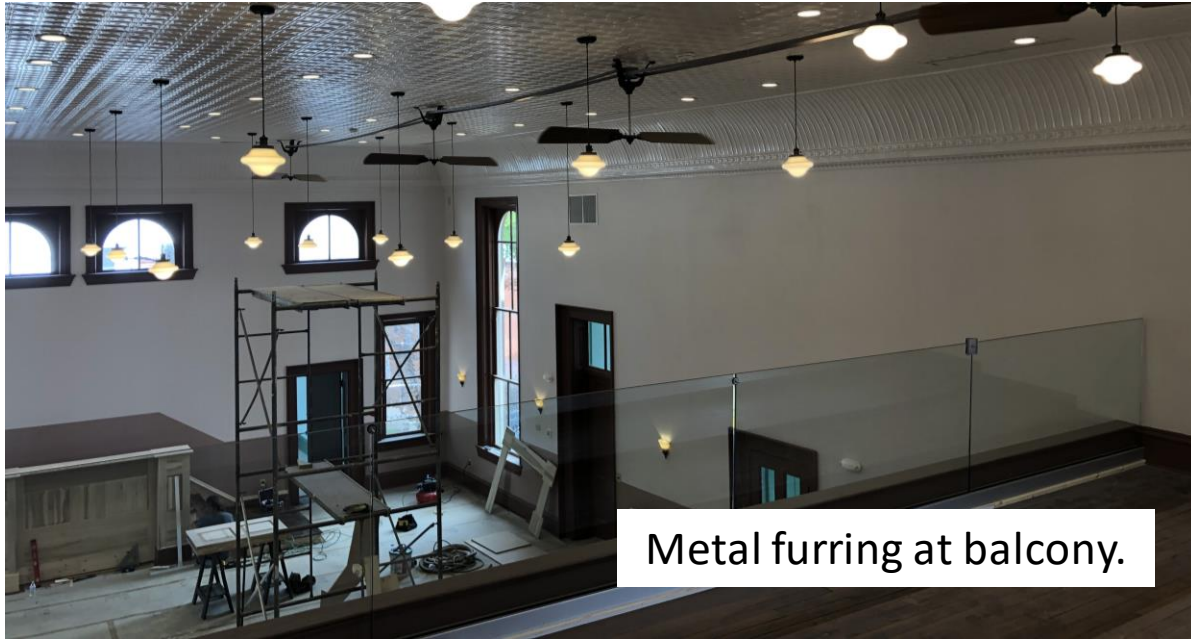
None of the existing plumbing for water or sewer could be seen beneath the building or in the walls. Extensive exploration had to take place in order to locate water and sewer lines to connect the new plumbing to. Old brick and concrete were discovered during the demolition process that would need to be carefully opened up or chipped away in order to accommodate plumbing lines and route them from one room to the other.

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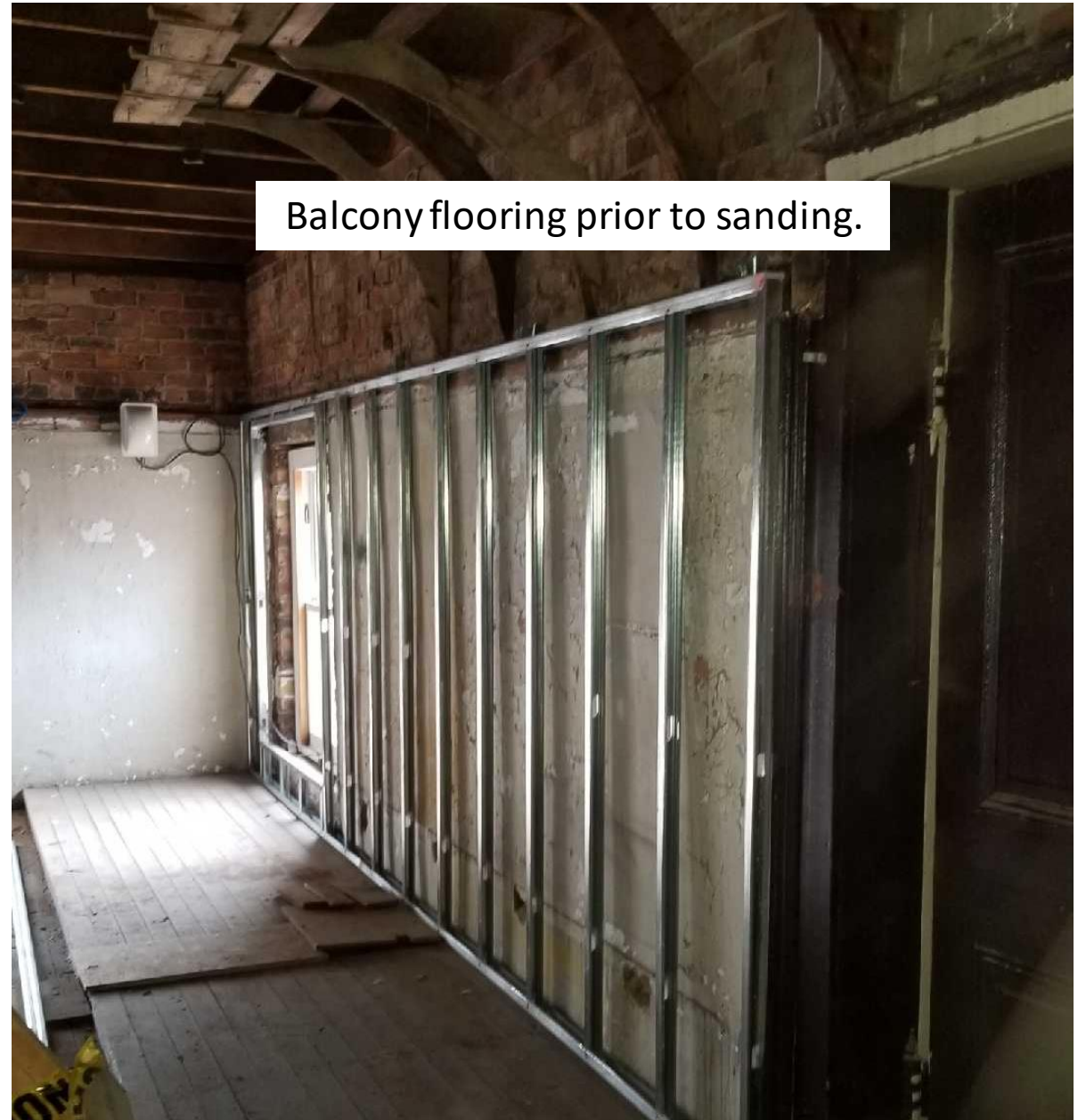
Existing flooring was exposed, stripped, repaired, replaced with custom wood, and refinished. The existing hardwood floor had been covered with plywood at some point in the 1970s, so anything beneath the subfloor was an unforeseen condition during the bidding process. There were many conduit routes cut into the existing wood floor that had to be cut and feathered with new wood creating more challenges of matching the existing grain and stain. Leaks were found in the clock tower, requiring extensive roof repair.

The elevator was a challenge. The elevator pit was located on the first floor beneath an existing janitor's closet, which included a mop sink, electrical, and the main panel box, all of which had to be relocated. All existing electrical and plumbing were relocated, the floor was carefully demoed, and an old water well or storage room constructed of brick was discovered. The dirt beneath the floor had to be hand-dug, brick chipped away, and removed from the building via wheelbarrow, to accommodate the 4' deep elevator pit.

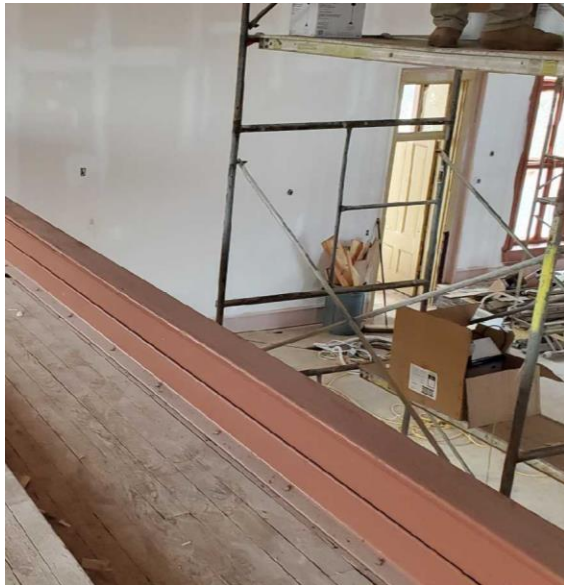
The mechanical systems had to be designed to accommodate a building constructed in 1879 with no modern building envelope insulating systems and for a very large room approximately 75,000 cubic feet with 14' windows, most nearly 15' high. Additional structural designs accommodated the units above the ceiling in the courtroom. The only aesthetically satisfactory location to install the exterior condensing units was nearly the maximum distance allowed for the line sets, resulting in some very creative routing. Luckily, the chimney that was discovered had enough room for the multiple line sets as well.



Metal furring at balcony.



Balcony flooring prior to sanding.



Finished glass rail.





Finishing carpentry and paint on the Judges Bench.





Judges Bench required stain application and painting to match.

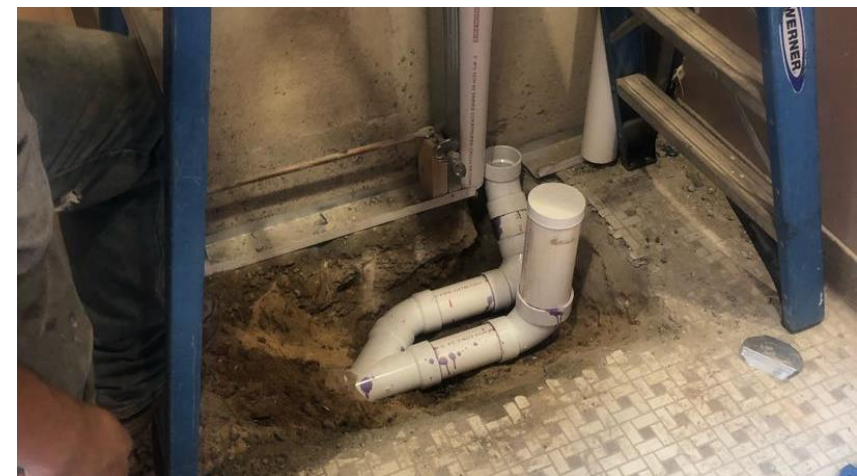


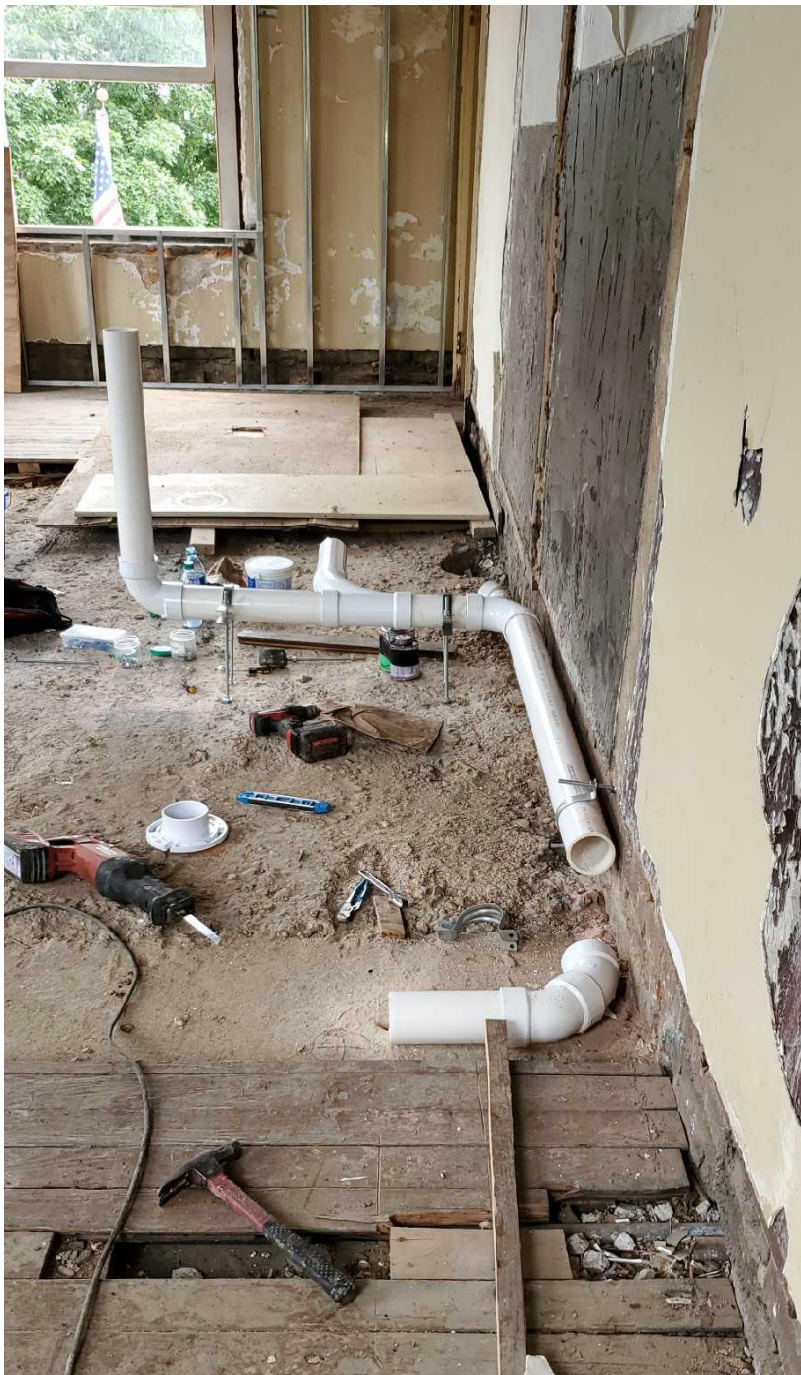


Bathroom: Final.

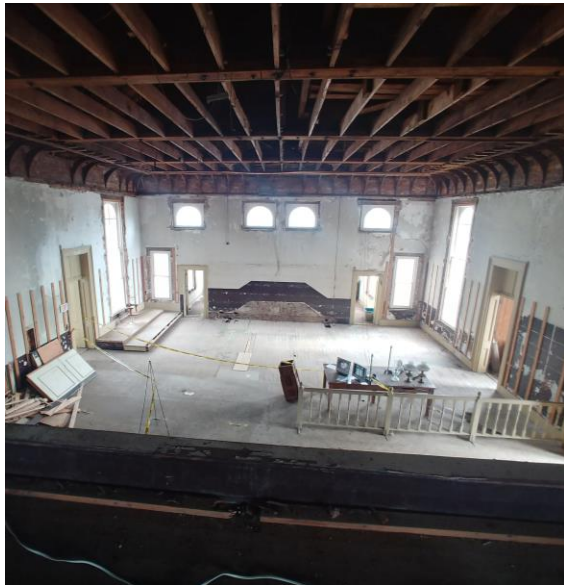
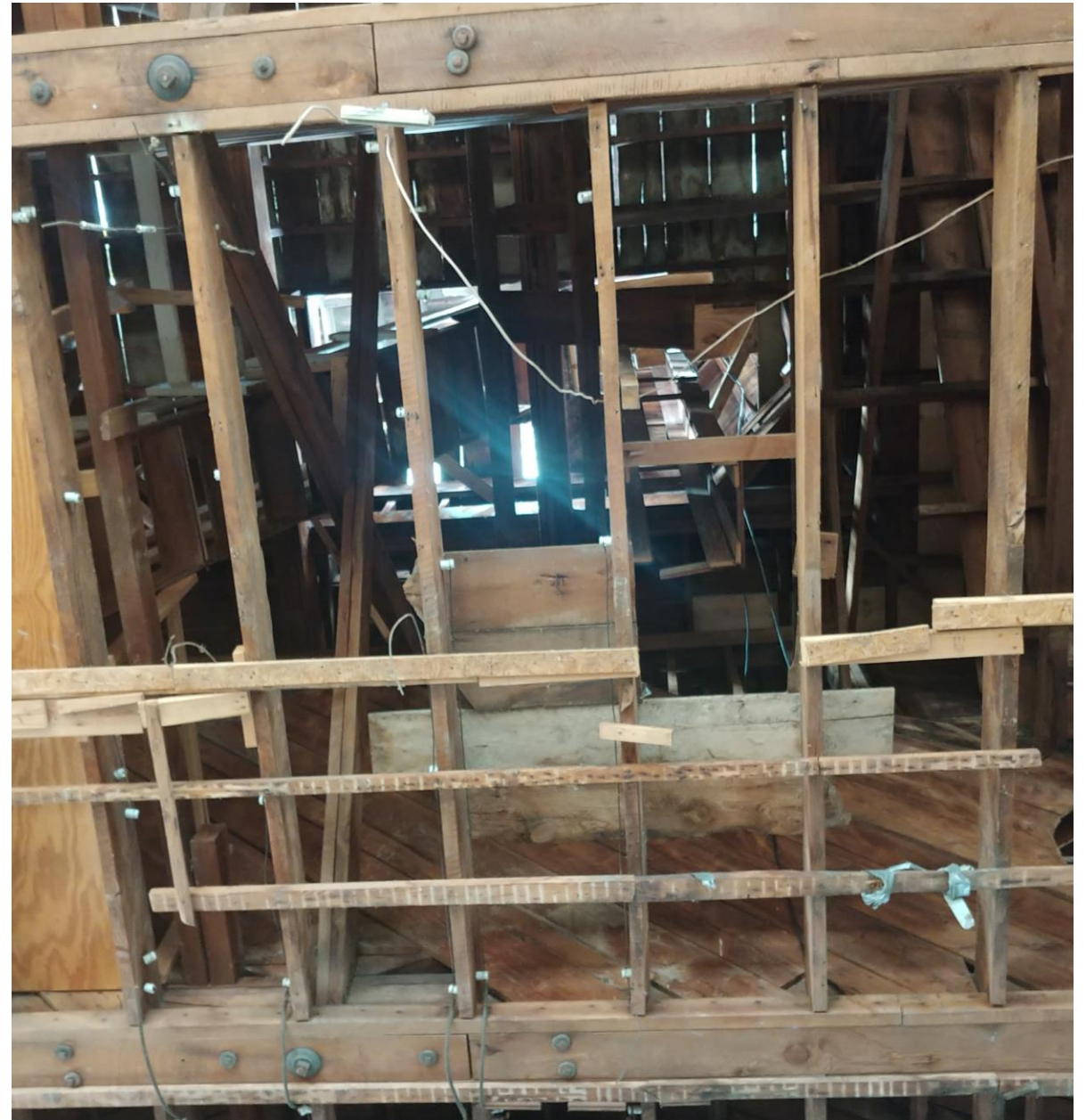


Bathroom: demo and tile application.





Ceiling work in main courtroom.







Extensive Blocking was installed to accommodate the custom metal ceiling tiles.



Precise measurements were required to make sure all light fixtures and diffusers were perfectly placed.

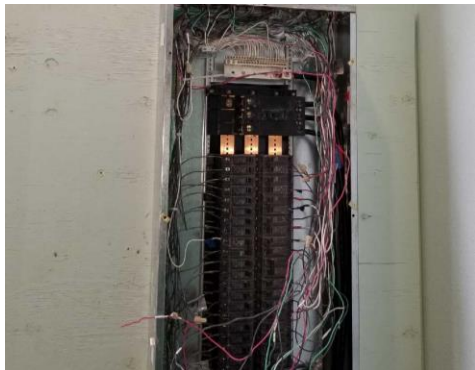
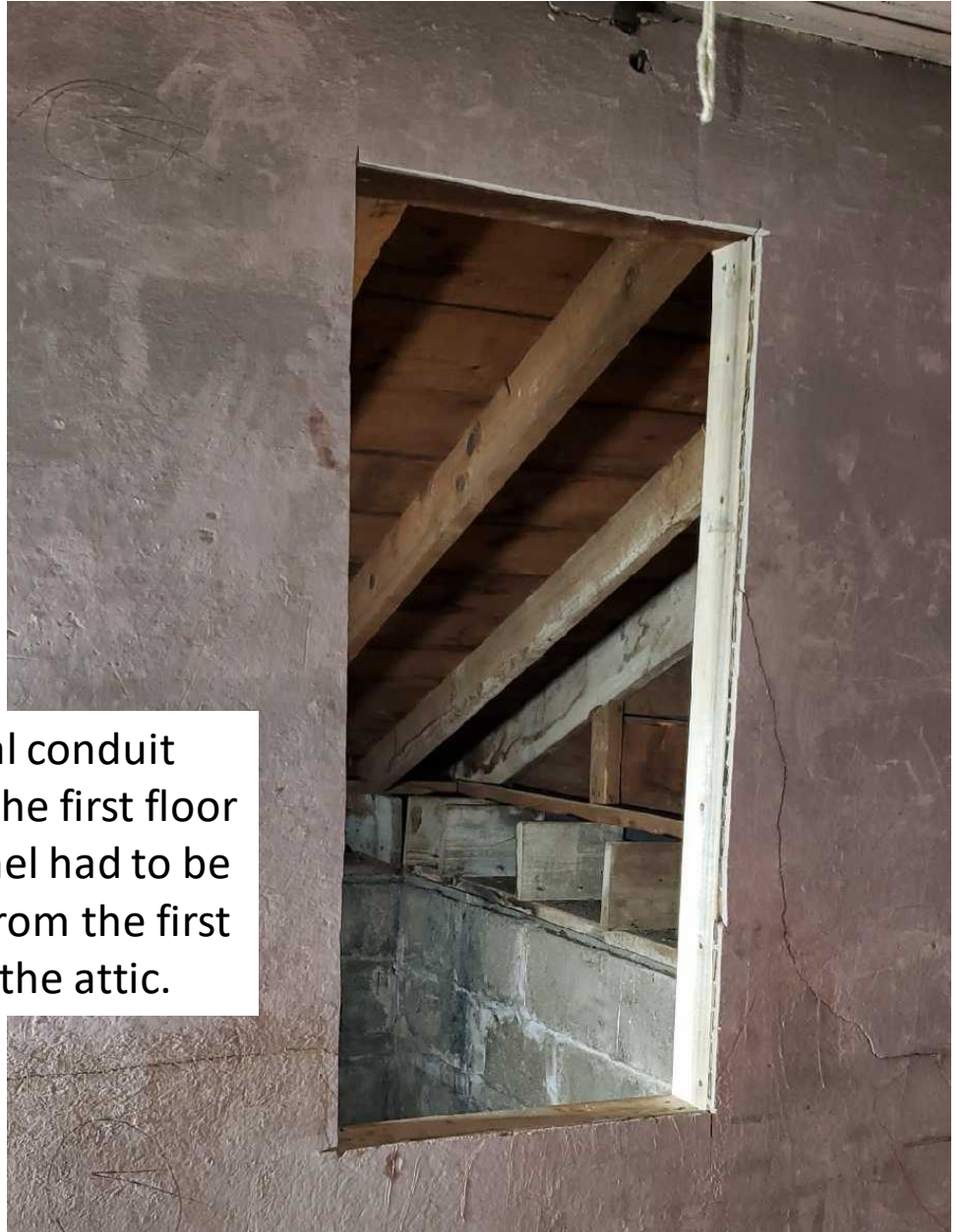




Finishing paint touches/finished carpentry wrapped around door casing to match existing.

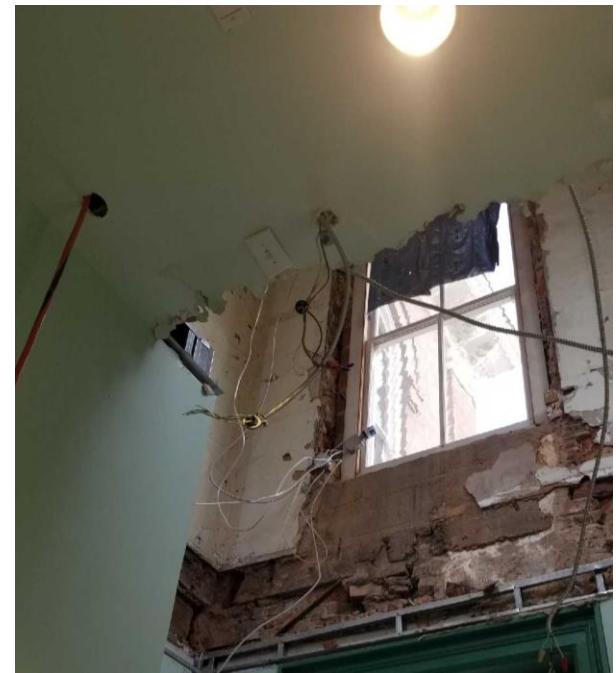


Electrical conduit discovery; the first floor service panel had to be relocated from the first floor to the attic.

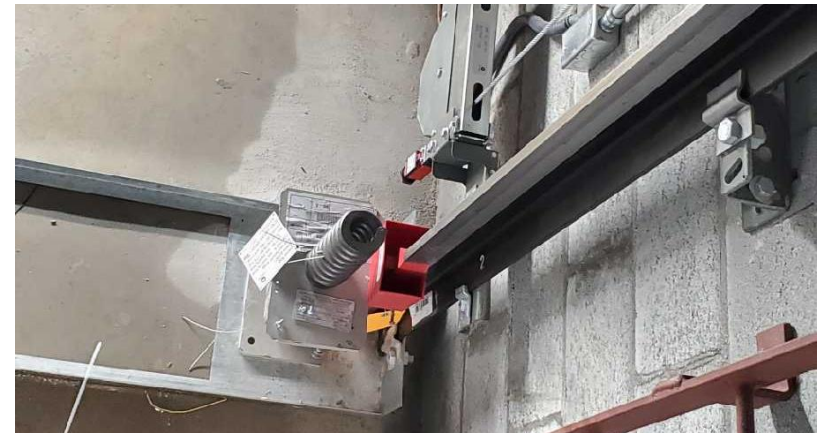
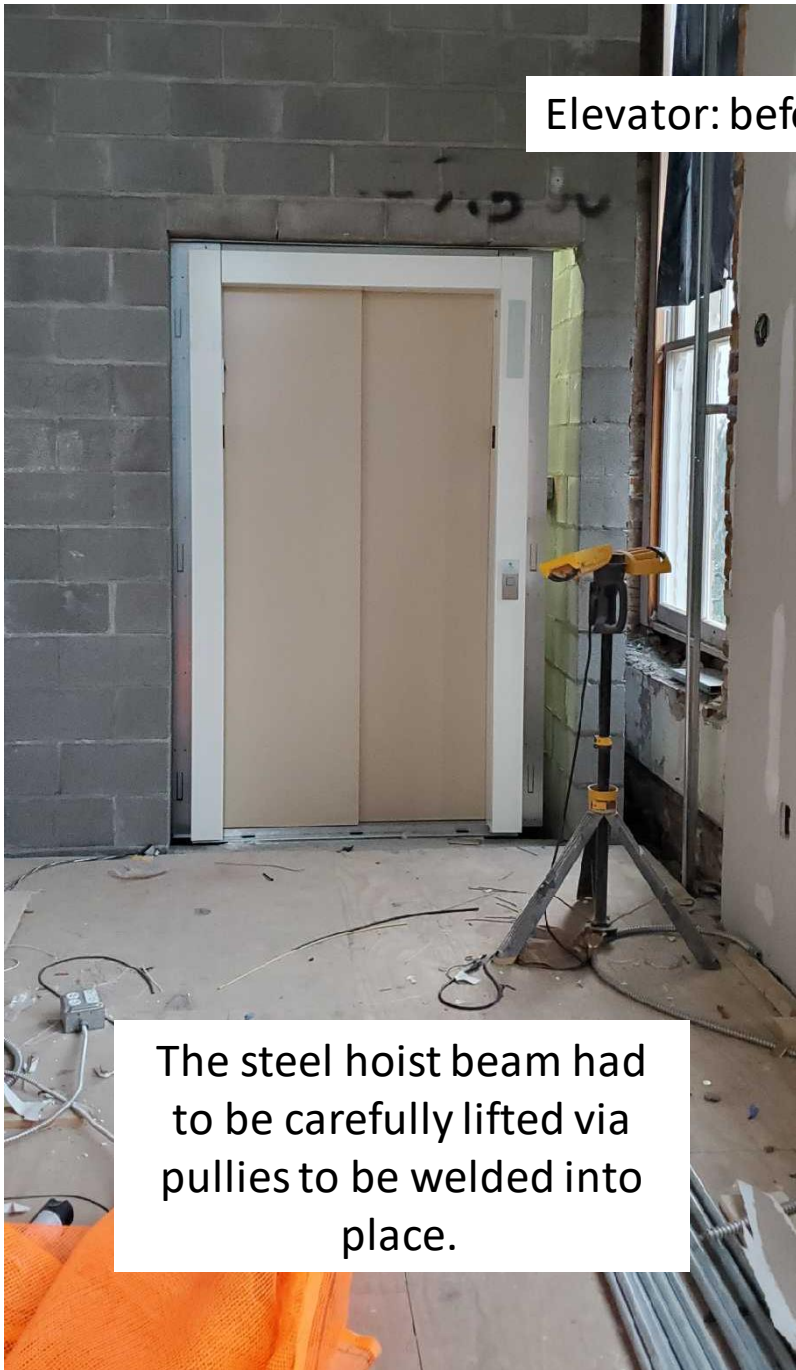




A Judges elevator shaft was discovered during demolition. The ductwork had to be strategically chased down the tight fitting shaft.



Elevator: before and after.



Custom millwork was required to match the reveal at the stair railing.

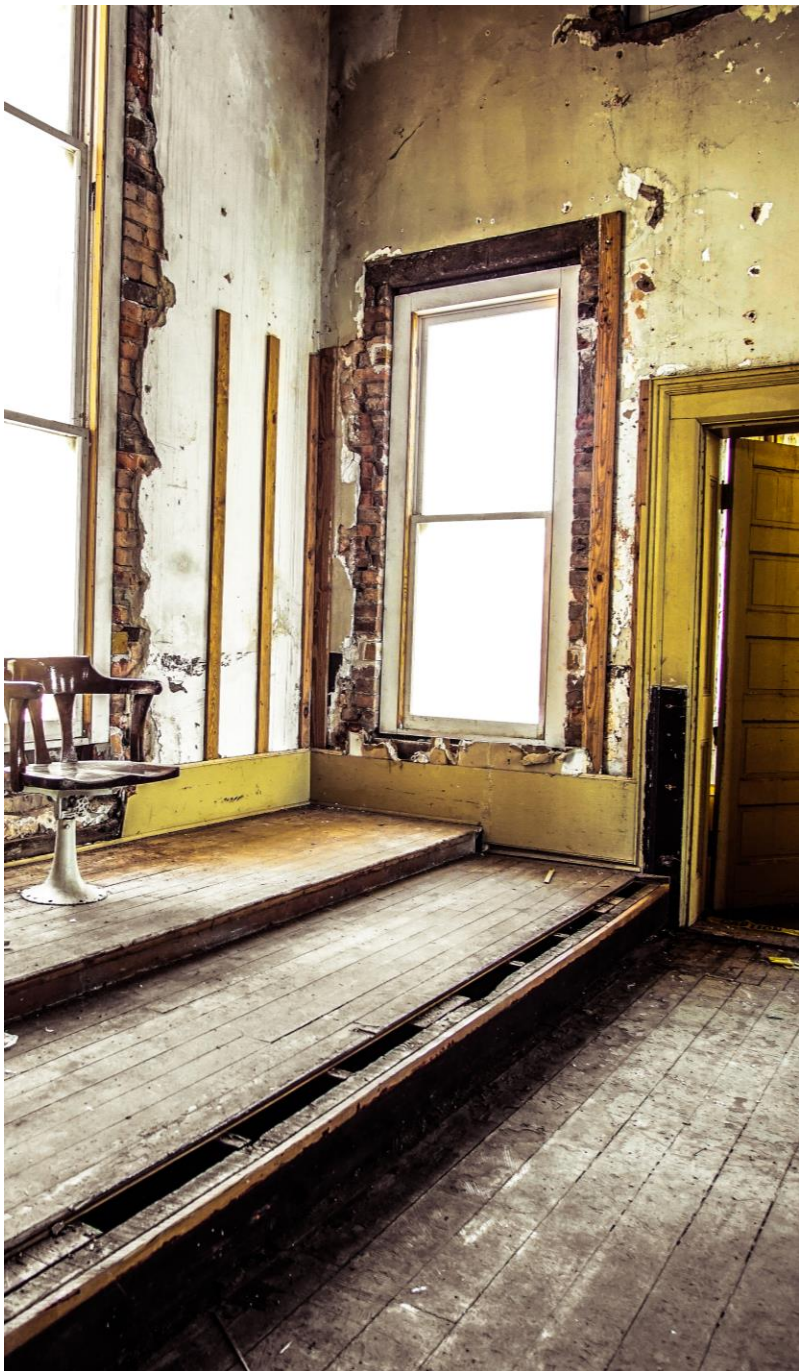


Brick was found during the elevator shaft dig. All brick and dirt had to be dug out and removed by hand.



Floor refinishing process.



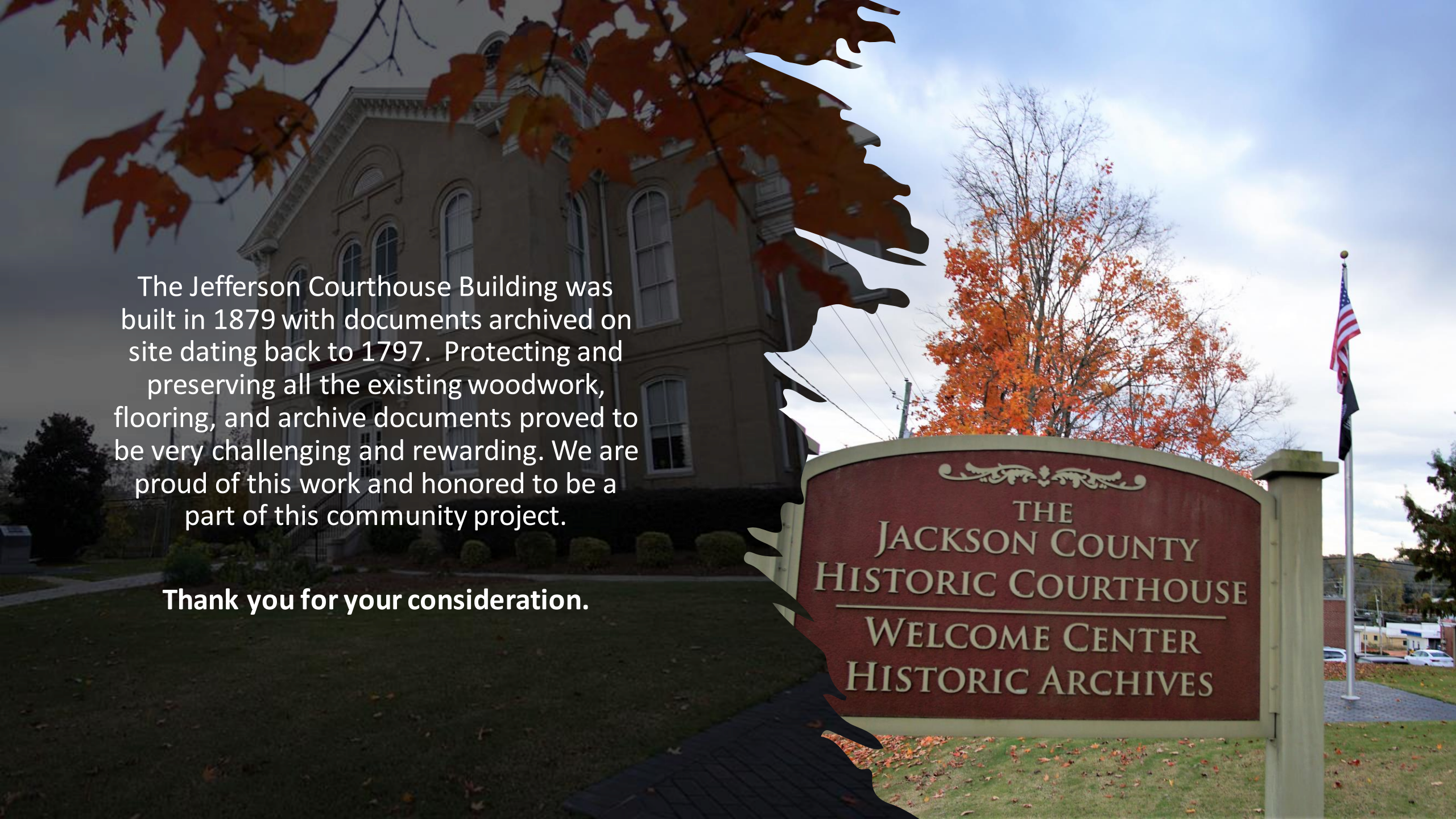






Completed project.





The Jefferson Courthouse Building was built in 1879 with documents archived on site dating back to 1797. Protecting and preserving all the existing woodwork, flooring, and archive documents proved to be very challenging and rewarding. We are proud of this work and honored to be a part of this community project.

Thank you for your consideration.

THE
JACKSON COUNTY
HISTORIC COURTHOUSE
WELCOME CENTER
HISTORIC ARCHIVES