The Story
The Chaloner House, also known as Cleaves Tavern, is a large saltbox-shaped residence overlooking the Lubec waterfront. Completed circa 1818, this timber frame structure is unusual for a floor plan that features two primary entrances and three formal front rooms on each floor -- unlike the vast majority of Federal-era houses. The floor plan and historic evidence strongly suggest that the house provided living quarters for a family as well as somewhat separate, and significantly less formal, facilities for boarders. The Chaloner House was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2007. In its nomination, the Maine Historic Preservation Commission noted the importance of this house to the region, as it “expands our conceptions of the living arrangements of 19th-century residents of Maine” and represents a regionally rare property type.

The Threat
The current owner has held the property for more than 40 years and is dedicated to its preservation but is not in a position to manage the property. The building is currently unoccupied, deteriorating, and subject to a reverse mortgage. Without prompt action the Chaloner House could be lost. The Lubec community cares deeply about this important structure but does not have the power to force action.

The Solution
Maine Preservation has the capacity and desire to assist the owner in selling the property to someone who will stabilize and rehabilitate the house. Maine Preservation calls on the mortgagee to enter into a dialogue about the property’s future and aid its transition to a new owner.