

## Village backs grant application to restore historic Palmer House in Cuba

CUBA—Efforts to restore the historic Palmer House in downtown Cuba took an important step forward last week when the village board voted to sponsor a grant that would help fund the project.

The grant is part of the Restore New York Communities Initiative through the Empire State Development Corp. The application was put together by the Cuba Friends of Architecture (CFA), which is seeking over \$700,000 to rehabilitate the Palmer House in the heart of Cuba's business district.

The building was erected in 1872 and hosted plays, minstrel shows and high school graduations in its heyday. In 2001 the roof of the building collapsed, leaving its future in jeopardy. Then, in 2005, the CFA acquired the building and was able to raise enough money through state grants and local funding to put a new roof on the structure. But more funding is needed to restore the building to its full glory.

According to the CFA's Dick Klein, if they receive the full grant amount the group would have the funding needed to restore the Palmer

House, making it available for modern activities.

At last week's village board meeting as many as nine residents attended in support of the vote. Carl Racibor noted that without the Palmer House there would be a big hole in Cuba's downtown business district. "Restoring it would be an asset to the community," he said.

Governor Pataki announced the Restore NY program to encourage economic development and neighborhood growth through financial assistance, allowing municipalities to revitalize commercial and residential properties.

CFA hopes that revitalizing the Palmer House will attract new commercial, retail or industrial tenants. One Cuba restaurateur has already shown interest in renting part of the building for a banquet hall.

Grants are expected to be announced sometime in October.

Cuba Friends of Architecture Inc. is a not for profit organization dedicated to restoring and preserving historic and architecturally significant buildings and structures in and around the Cuba area.