

## **National Trust Historic Preservation Fund Grant Provides Catalyst for Award of \$400K EPF Historic Preservation Grant for ‘Opendore’ Isabel Howland House Rehabilitation**

In March of 2011, the National Trust for Historic Preservation awarded a \$5,000 grant to the Howland Stone Store Museum (HSSM) in support of the *‘Isabel Howland House Rehabilitation Plan.’* The grant was matched with equal funds of the HSSM, and through a collaborative effort among local and state agencies and organizations, was used in support of an engineering investigation and development of a Rehabilitation Plan for the “Isabel Howland House”. The building (c.1837 – 1911) is one of 29 contributing buildings to the National Register-listed “Sherwood Equal Rights Historic District” in the Hamlet of Sherwood on Route 34B fourteen miles to the south of Auburn New York. Sherwood is a unique and largely intact 19<sup>th</sup> century rural New York Hamlet on the edge of the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor. The story behind the historic building is a compelling one of early women’s rights and education rights activities undertaken by a group of remarkable women. ‘Opendore’ was the gracious Howland family home where, a century ago, Isabel Howland and her family hosted numerous important public rallies promoting women's rights and other social justice activities.

The grant funds from the National Trust, used in support of the work of preservation professionals (architects, structural engineers and designers) resulted in guidance for stabilization and future use plans for the remarkable, endangered property. The planning work accomplished, provided the basis for a winning EPF funding proposal and a \$400K grant award in December 2011. The EPF grant also requires that \$1 be raised in matching funds for every dollar of grant funding. If this can be accomplished, the \$400K EPF grant award will be used in support of stabilization and rehabilitation of 'Opendore' for use as a museum and public meeting space. Both the National Trust for Historic Preservation and New York State acknowledge with these grant awards, the importance of preserving our region’s historic resources. The rehabilitation and proposed new use of ‘Opendore’ will link the Historic Hamlet of Sherwood with the congressionally supported “Votes for Women History Trail”, and the “Freedom Trail” through the uniquely storied and beautiful rural Central New York Region.

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### **About the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board**

The CNYRPDB is a public agency that was established in 1966 by Cayuga, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga and Oswego Counties. Financial support for the agency is provided by its member county contributions, state and federal grants, and contract service revenue. The CNYRPDB provides a comprehensive range of services associated with the growth and development of communities in Central New York with a focus on the following program areas: economic development, environmental management, land use and transportation planning, and regional information and research services. Currently, the CNYRPDB is assisting several communities in Cayuga and Oswego Counties as they try to identify and plan for the long-term goals of their communities.