

## Littleton latest town to be eyed for casino

Written by Administrator

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Littleton is the latest Bay State town to enter the increasingly competitive casino game as officials there have had preliminary talks about a possible gaming facility, the Herald has learned.

Clairvest, a Toronto-based casino company, has reached out to the town about a possible gambling parlor but no specific plan has been proposed, Littleton town administrator Keith Bergman said.

"Town officials have been familiarizing ourselves with the gaming statute and the impacts of such operations in other communities," Bergman said tonight. "The town of Littleton is committed to a full and thorough public input and review process for any proposal which might be submitted.

Clairvest, which operates a casino in suburban Chicago with Rush Street Gaming, is one of 11 firms that has met with the state gaming board about the application process. It's unknown if Clairvest would seek a full casino or a slots parlor. A company official did not return messages.

Clairvest operates at least seven casinos in the United States, Canada and Chile and most recently opened Rivers Casino in suburban Chicago. The company was also part of a group that sought to turn New York's Aqueduct racetrack into a casino but the deal fell apart and the racino is now run by another firm.

Clairvest's partner in the Chicago casino is developer Neil Bluhm's Rush Street Gaming. Representatives of Bluhm's company have also met with state gaming officials, MGC spokeswoman Elaine Driscoll said.

Officials from Clairvest and Rush Street did not return messages.

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Driscoll said the board should get a clearer picture of who all the true players are within a couple weeks. The board has set a Jan. 15 deadline for applicants to pay the state-required \$400,000 preliminary license fee.

Also, the state law requires gaming developers to strike a deal with local officials in the town or city where the facility will be built. Driscoll added that details of projects should come into focus in the coming weeks as developers start to hash out deals with host communities.

In addition to Clairvest and Rush Street Gaming, the companies that have met with the MGC are: MGM and Penn National, each of which has proposed a Springfield casino; Mohegan Sun, which has pitched a Palmer casino; Raynham Park and Plainridge Racecourse, each of which wants a slots parlor; Suffolk Downs and Wynn Resorts, each of which wants the sole Boston casino license; Ameristar, which recently pulled out of Springfield; and Hard Rock International, whose plans remain unknown.

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