Foxwoods Resort Casino has shaken off its referendum defeat in Milford a month ago and is searching for a way back into the Massachusetts casino sweepstakes, with a focus on the southeastern region of the state.

“We would like to be in Massachusetts,” confirmed Foxwoods chief executive Scott Butera in an interview. “We’re looking at a number of opportunities.”

Butera would not comment on specific communities, but the gambling giant has had conversations with officials in Fall River about building a casino in that city, according to a local person familiar with Foxwoods’ interest but not authorized to comment about it.

Asked if he has spoken to Foxwoods officials, Fall River’s mayor, Will Flanagan, offered a cryptic response: “Given the sensitivity of this, I can neither confirm nor deny if we are in discussions at this time,” the mayor said.

Flanagan then gave an enthusiastic sales pitch for his city, listing a number of reasons Fall River would be an excellent place for a resort casino, including the city’s convenient location near two state capitals, Boston and Providence, as well as two busy airports, Logan International and T.F. Green.

The mayor also predicted that the right casino plan could win a vote in Fall River, which, given the mixed track record of casino referendums this year, is a top concern of gambling executives.

Voters in West Springfield, Palmer, East Boston, and Milford — unmoved by expensive procasino advertising campaigns — have killed resort casino proposals at the ballot box. Voters in just three Massachusetts cities — Revere, Everett, and Springfield — approved resort-style casinos in 2013. Fall River is one of the few communities in the southeast region that is similar in profile to the procasino cities: economically distressed, largely urban, and already accustomed to busy roads and 24-hour businesses.

Butera said Foxwoods is “definitely considering the southeast,” though not exclusively that region. The final deadline to complete applications in the other two regions, Western Massachusetts and Greater Boston, is Dec. 31. The deadline makes it hard to imagine how the company could be involved in one of those zones, though the state’s emerging casino industry has been unpredictable.

“Who knows what other twists and turns this process could take?” Butera said.

Interest from Foxwoods could renew attention on the sole resort casino license designated for Southeastern Massachusetts. Casino development in the southeast has taken a back seat while the state gambling commission oversees the license competition for the other two regions and for the state’s sole slot parlor.

The southeast region got a late start due to language in the 2011 state casino law that delayed bidding in the southeast to allow a federally recognized tribe, expected to be the Mashpee Wampanoag, time to make progress on a tribal casino in the region. Tribal casinos are approved under a federal process separate from the state’s competition.

The Mashpee want to build a casino in Taunton, but face legal hurdles to federal approval. Last April, the gambling commission lifted the freeze on commercial casino applications in the region, to try to ensure that the southeast would not fall too far behind the other areas.

But the possibility that the Mashpee may someday overcome their legal obstacles and open a gambling resort has seemed to chill interest from commercial developers.

Just one company, KG Urban, filed the $400,000 fee by last September’s deadline for new applicants to enter the contest for the southeast license. KG wants to build a casino in New Bedford. The city’s mayor, Jon Mitchell, has been skeptical in public comments that the gambling industry is right for his city.

As a failed applicant in another region, Foxwoods and its partners are exempt from the September deadline and could propose a casino in the southeast without paying another

application fee. Other former applicants that could slide into the southeast include Rush Street Gaming and Hard Rock International.

The gambling commission expects to be in a position to award the southeast license by next November. It expects to award the other two resort licenses by May.

Foxwoods joined the Massachusetts casino market in February as a partner in an effort to build a casino off Interstate 495 in Milford, within the Greater Boston casino region. Foxwoods proposed a campus of low-rise buildings around a “town green,” on a wooded site, but Milford voters were adamantly against it, defeating the proposal 65 percent to 35 percent in a referendum on Nov. 19. The “no” votes prevailed in each of eight voting precincts.

In the Milford campaign, Foxwoods and its supporters tried to promote the benefits of the development: thousands of jobs and millions of dollars in revenue to the town. Opponents argued that a gambling resort was an out-of-scale development for the suburbs.

The failure of the Milford project left just two applicants for the Greater Boston license: Wynn Resorts, in Everett, and the last-minute entry of a Mohegan Sun plan in Revere. The state gambling commission on Thursday waived one of its deadlines to permit a Revere referendum on the Mohegan Sun project, expected in February. To move forward, Mohegan Sun needs to reach a deal with Revere officials; talks have been ongoing but no deal has been announced.

The single Western Massachusetts resort license has just one remaining suitor: MGM Resorts, which has proposed a casino in Springfield.

Three companies are in the hunt for the state’s only slot parlor license: Penn National Gaming, in Plainville; Raynham Park, in Raynham; and Cordish Cos., in Leominster. That license is expected to be awarded in February or March.

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