

Casino attorneys seek to delay USD 50 million licensing fees

Philadelphia – Companies planning casinos in the city are seeking to delay payment of USD 50 million licensing fees, saying they are still jumping through hoops to obtain the licenses.

„We think it’s only fair that we know we can open and operate a casino before we are asked to pay for the right to do so,“ said Dan Fee, a spokesman for SugarHouse Casinos, which proposes a slot machine facility in the Fishtown area.

The fees are due Friday from SugarHouse and Foxwoods Casino Philadelphia, winners of the two permits for slot machine facilities in Philadelphia, but both said they would ask the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board on Thursday for more time.

Among other things, the City Council has not approved zoning and building permits, pending legislation could force the companies to seek new locations, and the Planning Commission wants more information before it sends the Foxwoods site plan and zoning change to the Council.

The casinos argue that legislators intended the license fees to be paid when the casinos were ready to be built. „Right now, the license is essentially unusable,“ said Maureen Garrity, a Foxwoods spokeswoman.