

ZONING FROM A TO Z

Manufacturing Districts (Chapter 17-5) – Part III

Part I of this review of Manufacturing districts described generally the three M districts, their location within Sheffield, and how they are differentiated based upon floor area ratio (FAR) standards, just as in Residential and Business and Commercial districts. Part II reviewed other limitations: front and rear setbacks, and screening for outdoor work and storage areas. This installment will focus on the types of uses allowed in M districts.

Part I of Manufacturing Districts observed that few M districts fall within the Sheffield neighborhood except on its western boundary, between the Clybourn corridor and the Chicago River. Further, most of these M districts are part of Planned Manufacturing Districts or Planned Developments, both of which will be covered in future articles. However, there are M districts along the railroad tracks south of Belden between Lakewood and Wayne; on Fullerton at Lakewood; on Fullerton and Racine (site of the former Rubens Baby Factory that currently serves as a DePaul University surface parking lot); and in the triangle formed by Ashland, Fullerton, and Clybourn. All of these districts are zoned M1 except for the triangle at Ashland, Fullerton, and Clybourn, which is zoned M2.

Although designed for industrial uses, M zoning nevertheless accommodates limited residential living, a number of commercial uses, and several public and civic uses.

As in residential and business and commercial districts, some uses are *permitted as of right*, some require *special use approval*, and some are *not allowed*. Special use approval involves a case-by-case review procedure to determine whether the use will be compatible with surrounding uses and development patterns. The process requires public notice of the hearing before the Zoning Board of Appeals, which must find that the proposed use in the proposed location meets certain criteria.

Industrial Uses. M1 (Limited Manufacturing/Business Park District) zoning is designed to accommodate low-impact manufacturing, wholesaling, warehousing, and distribution activities that occur within enclosed buildings. Thus, M1 zoning does not permit intensive manufacturing and production uses, nor does it permit certain recycling facilities. More important, it does not permit Waste-Related uses, such as hazardous material disposal or storage, incinerators, or sanitary landfills.

Waste-related uses similarly are not allowed in M2 districts. On the other hand, M2 can accommodate more uses than M1 in the categories of manufacturing, recycling, and warehousing, some of which are permitted as of right and a few of which require special use approval.

Residential Living. Residential uses are severely limited in M districts. With special use approval, M1 and M2 districts allow temporary overnight shelters and transitional shelters.

Commercial Uses. Both M1 and M2 districts allow a host of commercial uses. Permitted uses include animal services (from kennels to stables), building maintenance services, business

support services (copying, trade schools, employment agencies), communication services, eating and drinking establishments (including taverns), financial services, food and beverage retail sales, offices, personal services, repair or laundry services, residential storage warehouses, retail sales, car washes, and vehicle storage and towing. Some of these uses are subject to a maximum square footage requirement, however.

Commercial uses that require special use approval in M1 and M2 districts include adult uses, drive-through facilities, gas stations, pay day loan stores and pawn shops, and non-accessory parking.

Public and Civic Uses. M1 and M2 districts permit day cares, parks, postal services, public safety services, and minor utilities and services. Detention and correctional facilities and major utilities are allowed but only as special uses.

Fortunately, the new version of the code contains a simple chart outlining the possible uses for each manufacturing district and whether they are permitted as of right, require special use approval, or are not allowed. The entire code and the chart are available by visiting www.cityofchicago.org, then selecting the Zoning and Land Use Department and clicking on Zoning Code.

This is the twelfth in a series of articles designed to educate the community about the basics of the new zoning code adopted in late 2004. The first five installments focused on residential districts, the next four focused on business and commercial districts, and the most recent focus on manufacturing districts. If you would like to learn about a particular topic, contact the Association; please be as specific as possible when describing your topic or question. Electronic copies of previous installments are available on the SNA website, www.sheffieldneighborhood.org; select the "Newsletter" tab on the left, then click for archived news articles.