

Green, greener, alternative green... Freiburg local party politics!

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Freiburg is well known as the green city. This is not just because of its beautiful “green” location and parks, but more so because of its long history of green party politics and their ambitions to turn Freiburg into “The Green City”.

Since 2002 Freiburg has got the first green Mayor in a German larger city and the green party has most seats in the local parliament. But wait – here we have to be more specific, because the history of the green political movement in Germany is characterized by small movements merging into what now is called [Alliance `90/The Greens](#). On the local level in Freiburg this party is cooperating with the voters’ association “Young Freiburg” to form a faction in parliament (“Young Freiburg” only represents one seat of the 13 seats of the faction). In 2008 two members of the local parliament faction of the greens decided to quit this party and founded a green opposition party for a “tolerant, colorful and relaxed Freiburg”; the “Green Alternative Freiburg” was born. They wanted real green politics, especially because the greens work together with the conservatives, which are the second strongest faction (10 seats out of 48).



Now, four years later there are two recent developments in the battle between “green” and “ alternative green”. There was a lawsuit issued by the Alliance `90/The Green of Baden Württemberg, against the Green Alternative in 2011 because they wanted to prohibit the Green Alternative to use the term “green” or “Green” because people could be confused or mistake their identity. Very telling for a former grassroots movement to not expect local people to differentiate between different shades of green and claiming the monopoly for being green! But they lost this case and the future for a multifaceted green city Freiburg seemed bright.

One would think this would encourage the alternative green associates, but they have an internal issue! The former speaker of this rather leftist group Tina Gröbmayer, a lawyer by profession, is supporting a case which defends a neo-Nazi who is accused of attempted homicide (I am not sure if this is the right legal term, German: versuchter Totschlag). She justifies her decision with her understanding of rule of law that everyone has the right to a lawyer. This very “noble” move of her had drastic consequences. Protesting against her decision all other board members of the voters’ association stepped down. Now the voters’ associating seems to be falling apart and its future is unclear. It is all in a big mess...

It is a bit sad to see that different greens fighting with and within each other, what would you expect from party politics?

The references are all in German: [Süddeutsche](#), [Südkurier](#), [Badische Zeitung](#): [Namesstreit](#), [GAF](#), [GAF Treffen](#)

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