

## Roger TW Lawrence

Hello! My name is Roger Lawrence and even if we haven't met, you probably know who I am. I'm the Guy with the Dog. You'll have seen me often in town or on the trail with Loki, my big fluffy German Shepherd, who waits politely at crosswalks and loves everyone he meets.

But you probably don't know that I stand between two worlds. I grew up in a Williams faculty family that was nurtured by campus life and expressed its appreciation by creating a fellowship fund that carries our Lawrence name and is still awarded to Williams students. However, I chose to pursue an education in architecture, and I work with those who labor with tools in their hands. I came to value and respect both worlds. In Williamstown today, however, the relationship between them is strained.

Over the last 10 years, I have watched the dialogue between the town community and Williams College steadily deteriorate in quality. For decades before that, the conversation was a good one. I grew up here, and I saw it. We need that mutually respectful conversation to return.

Most critically, there is a groundswell of concern in our community that the College's development agenda is damaging the town and eroding conditions for workers and their families in the community. Underlying that is an ill-defined fear that powerful decision makers don't care.

Open, frank, and constant communication is the key. My message to the College is: Please be transparent and direct with the wider Williamstown community. Respect us, as we respect you, and let's work together to find solutions that work for ALL of us. We need to understand first-hand what your needs and intentions are. If we can all communicate openly, we will work with you to fulfill your plans, as long as we retain the character of our town.

We have the perfect opportunity right now to better serve and understand each other. Williams has a recently new president who is getting to know us. I have seen her act with courage, intelligence, and grace. We can reforge the bonds that have connected these two communities for more than two centuries. Let's make it happen.

I believe my life experience positions me well to help repair and strengthen this relationship and move both the town and the College forward. That's why I'm running for the Williamstown Planning Board. For all these reasons I ask for your vote on May 11.